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THE
BATMAN**

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ALAN GRANT & JOHN WAGNER
STORY

NORM BREYFOGLE
ART

TODD KLEIN
LETTERING

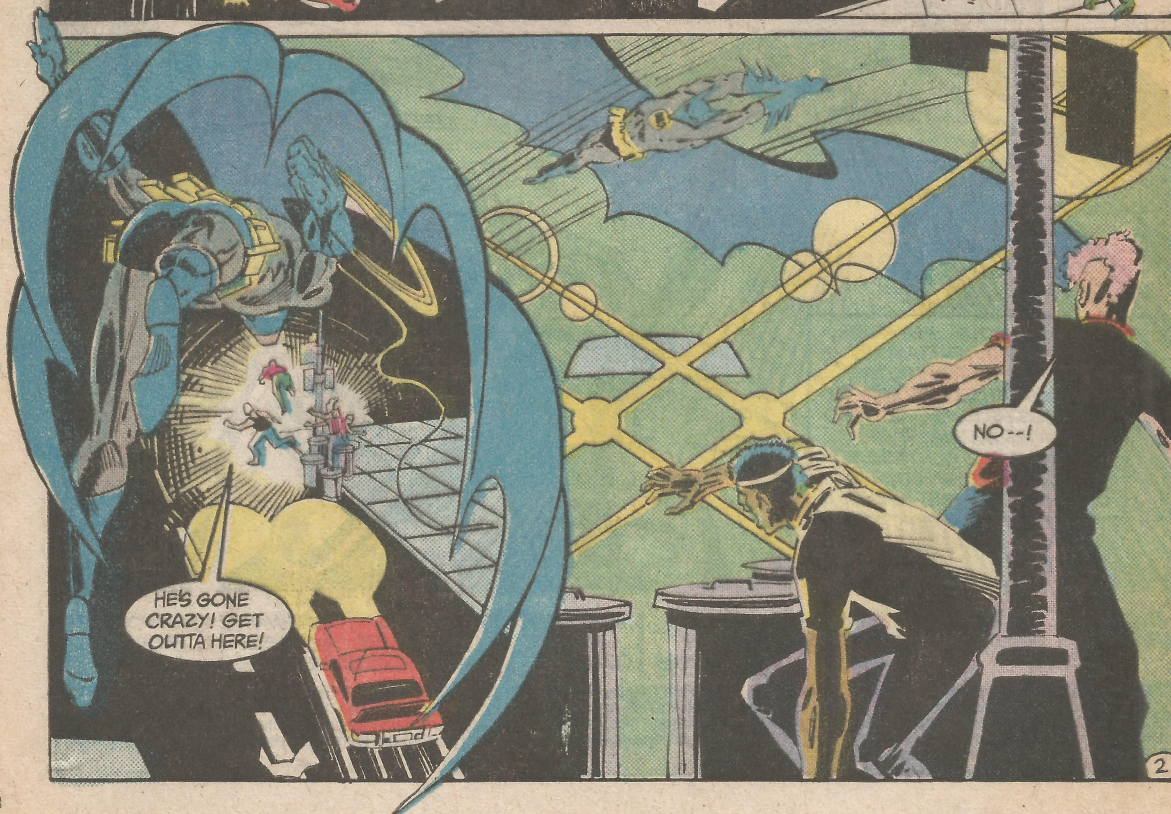
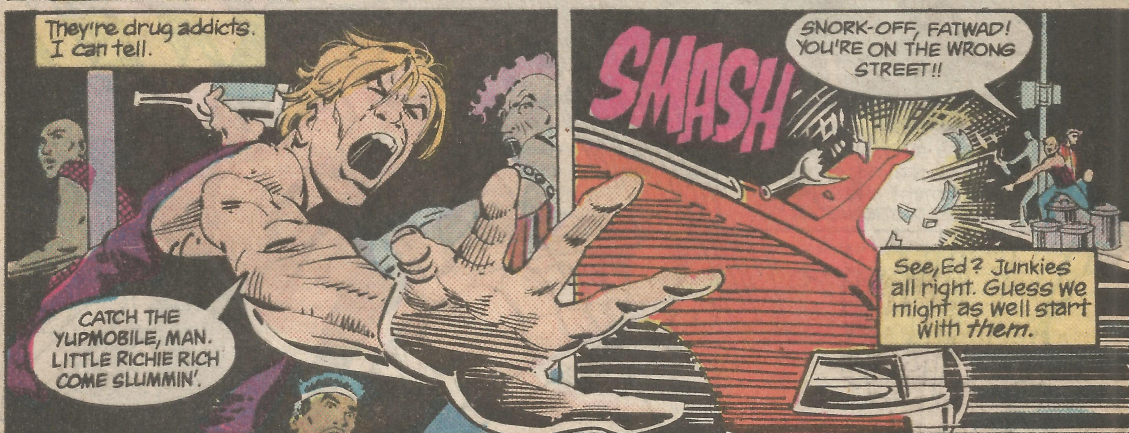
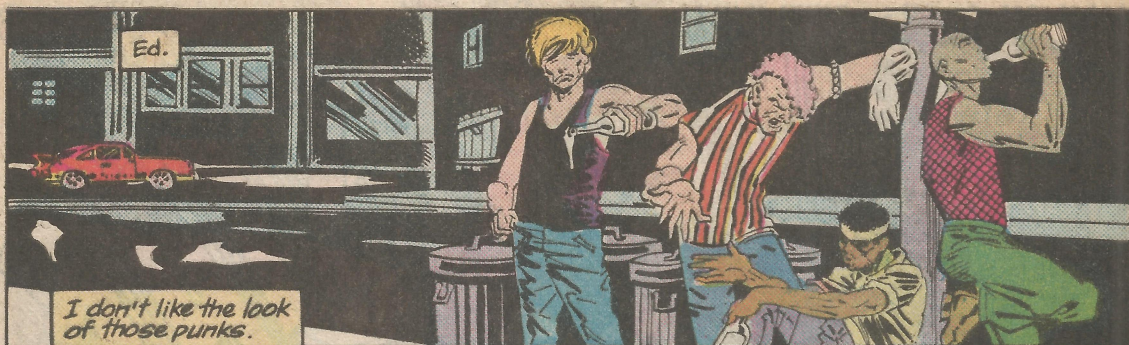
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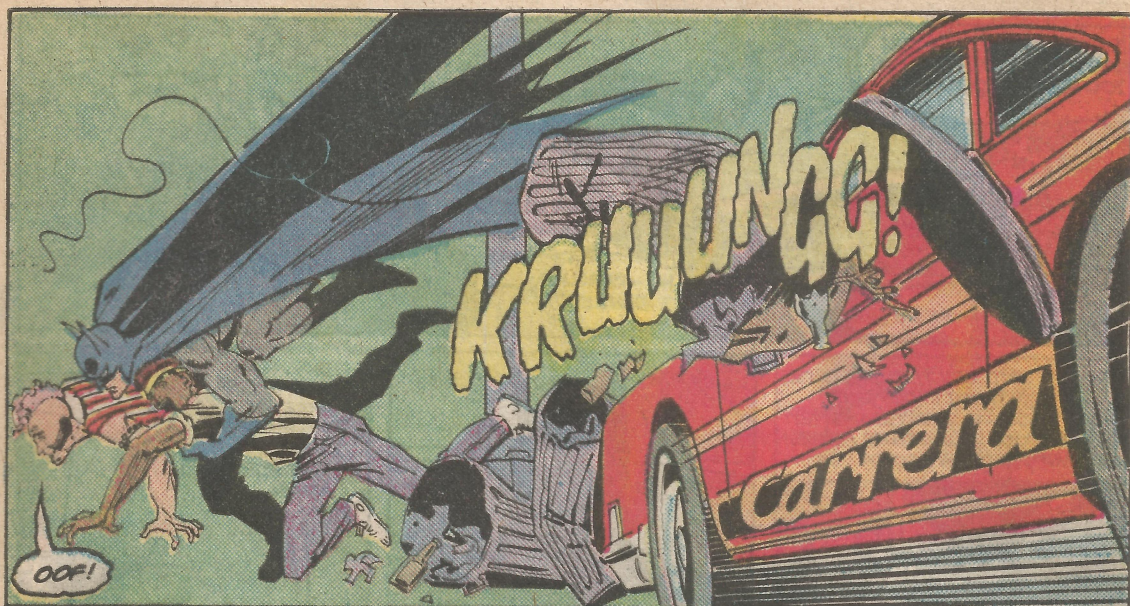
DANIEL RASPLER
ASST. EDITOR

DENNY O'NEIL
EDITOR

CREATED BY
BOB KANE

DETECTIVE COMICS 594 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DETECTIVE COMICS, DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 1981, New York, NY 10185. Annual subscription rate \$9.00. Outside U.S.A. \$11.00 in U.S. funds. Copyright © 1988 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives Inc., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400. Printed in U.S.A.
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Maybe just as well, though. *The Batman* plays no part in our night's business!

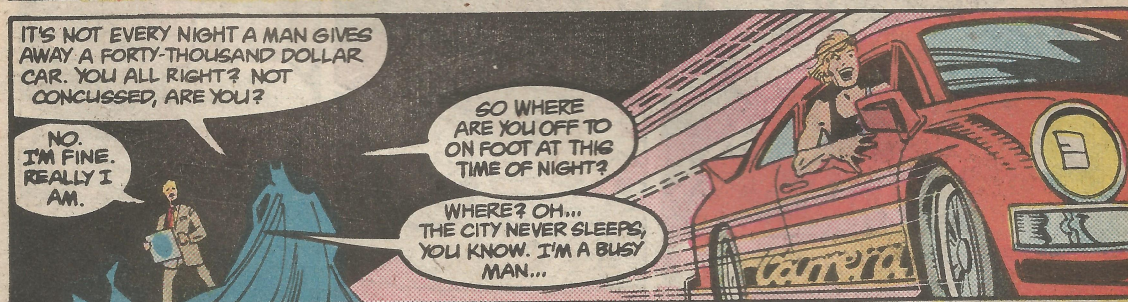


NO... I...
UH... UH...

You sneezed, Ed. A momentary lapse of concentration. You're very sorry.

I... I'M VERY SORRY. I SNEEZED--LOST CONTROL FOR A SECOND. REALLY--I COULDN'T HELP IT!





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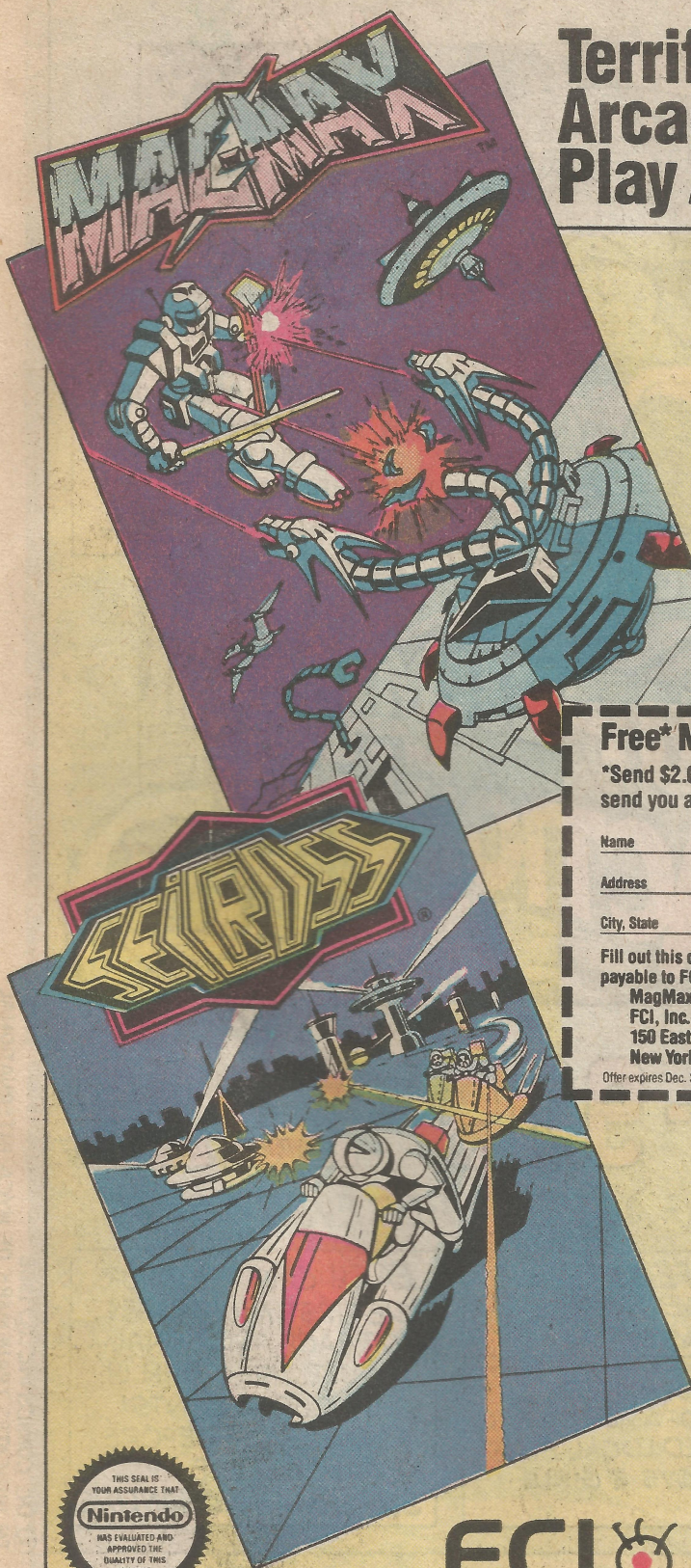
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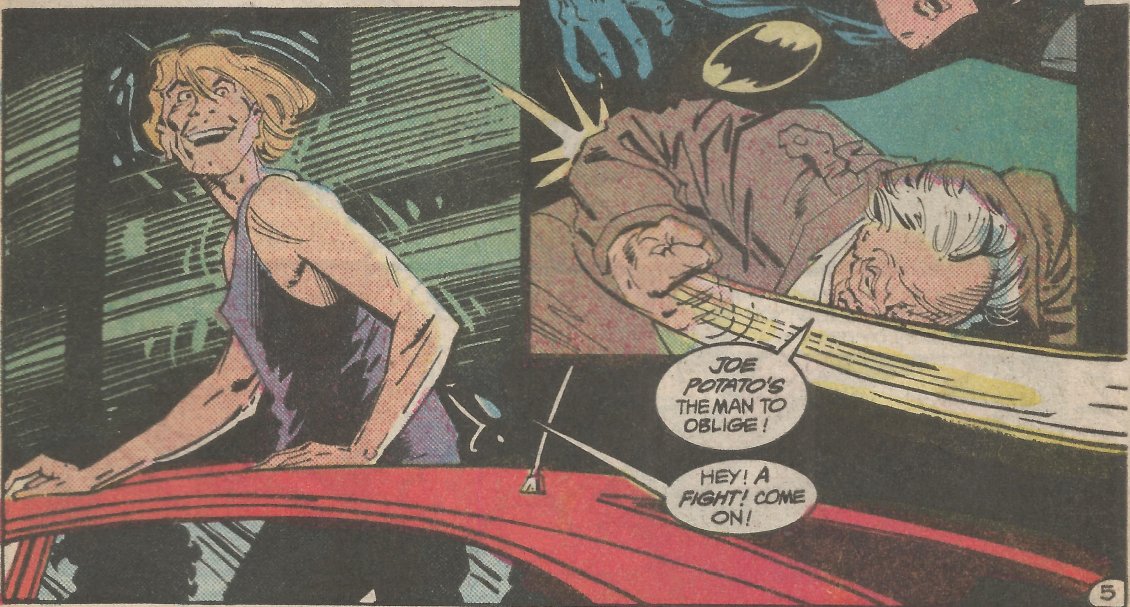
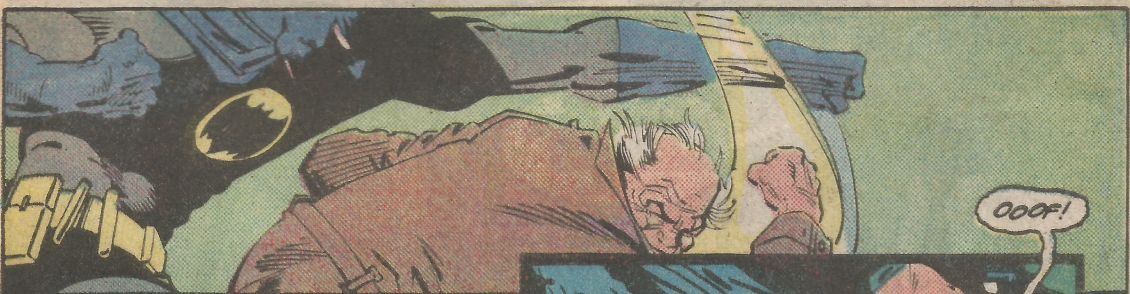
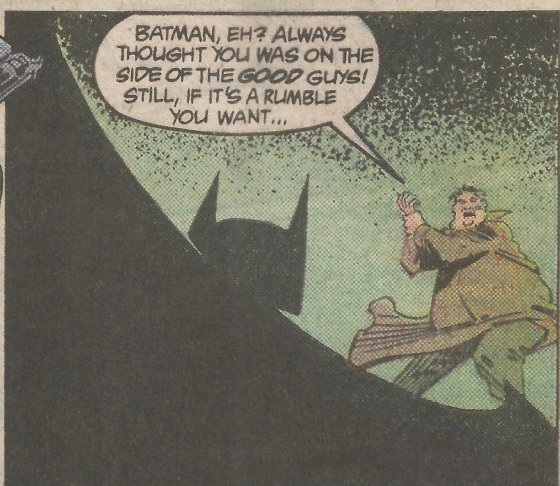
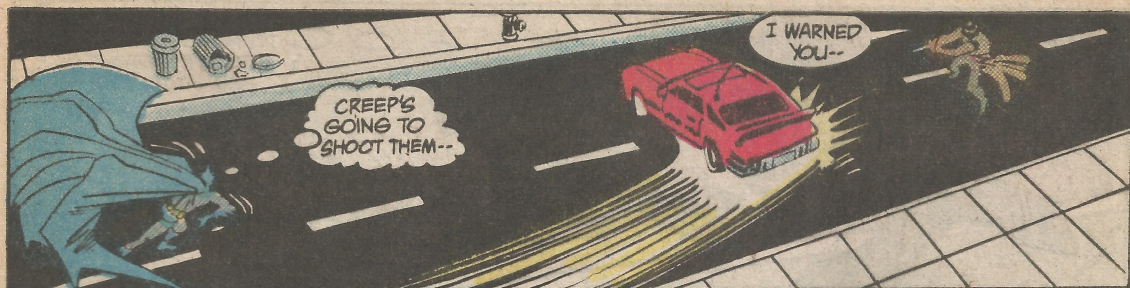
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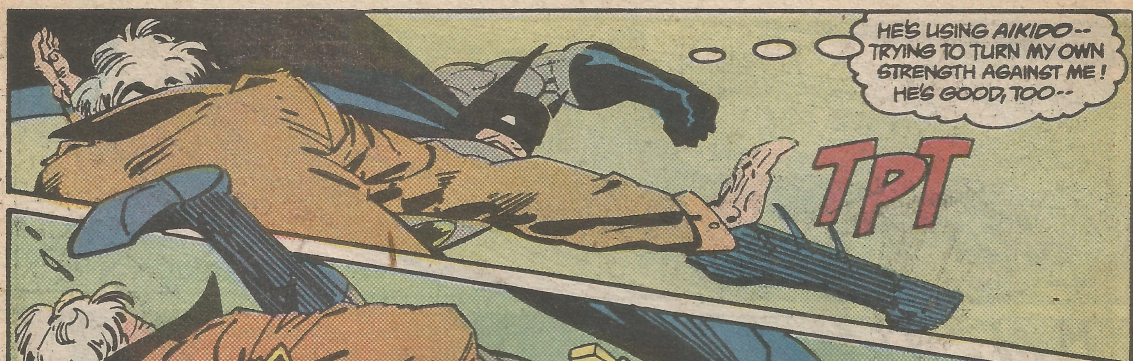
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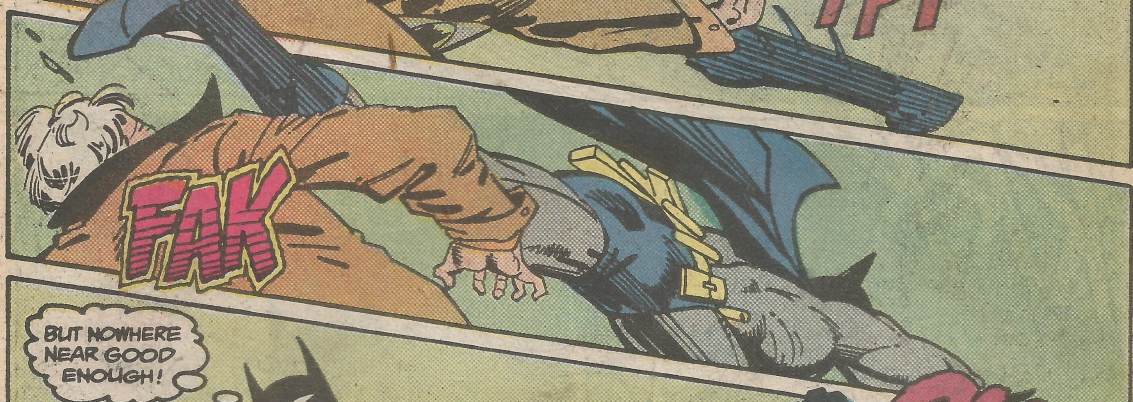
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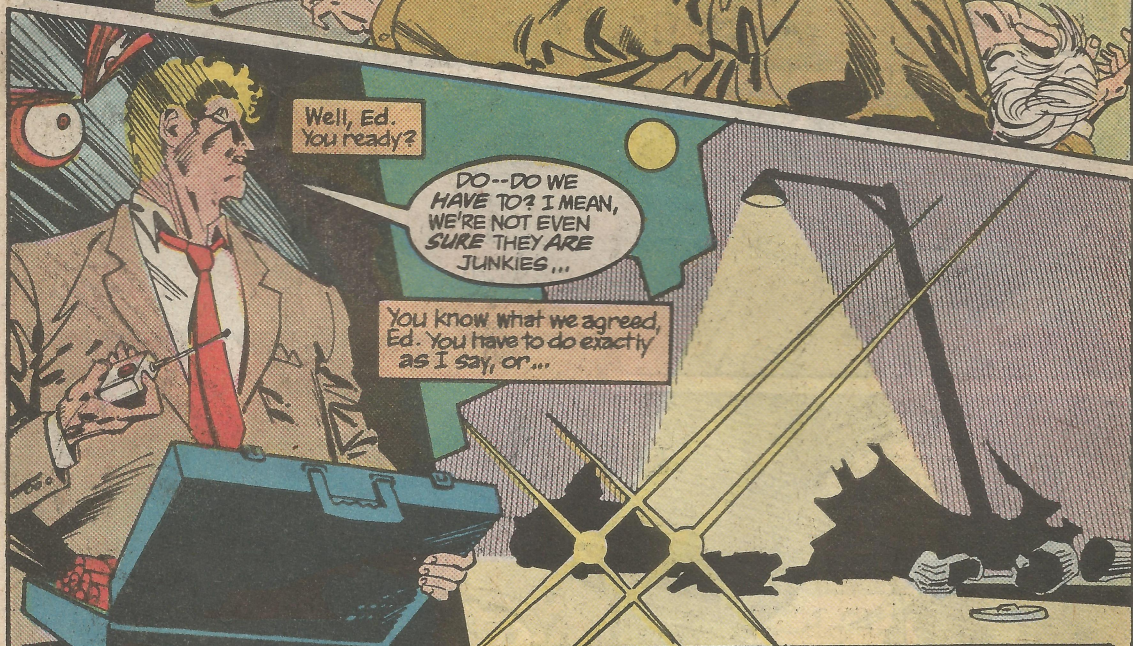
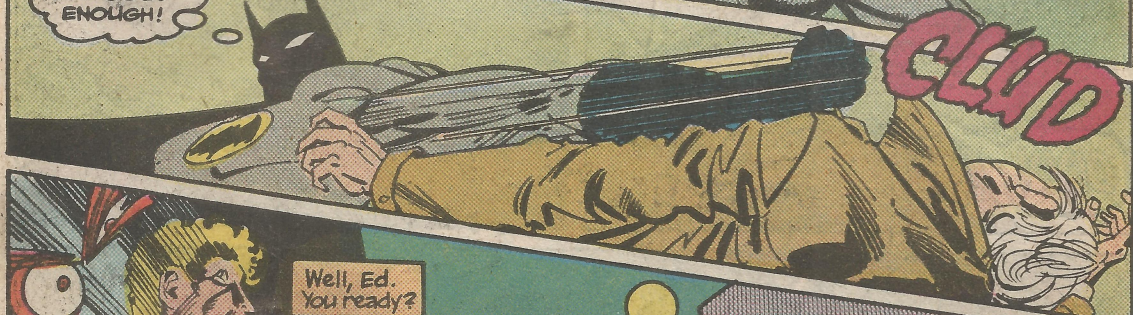




HE'S USING AIKIDO--
TRYING TO TURN MY OWN
STRENGTH AGAINST ME!
HE'S GOOD, TOO--



BUT NOWHERE
NEAR GOOD
ENOUGH!



Well, Ed.
You ready?

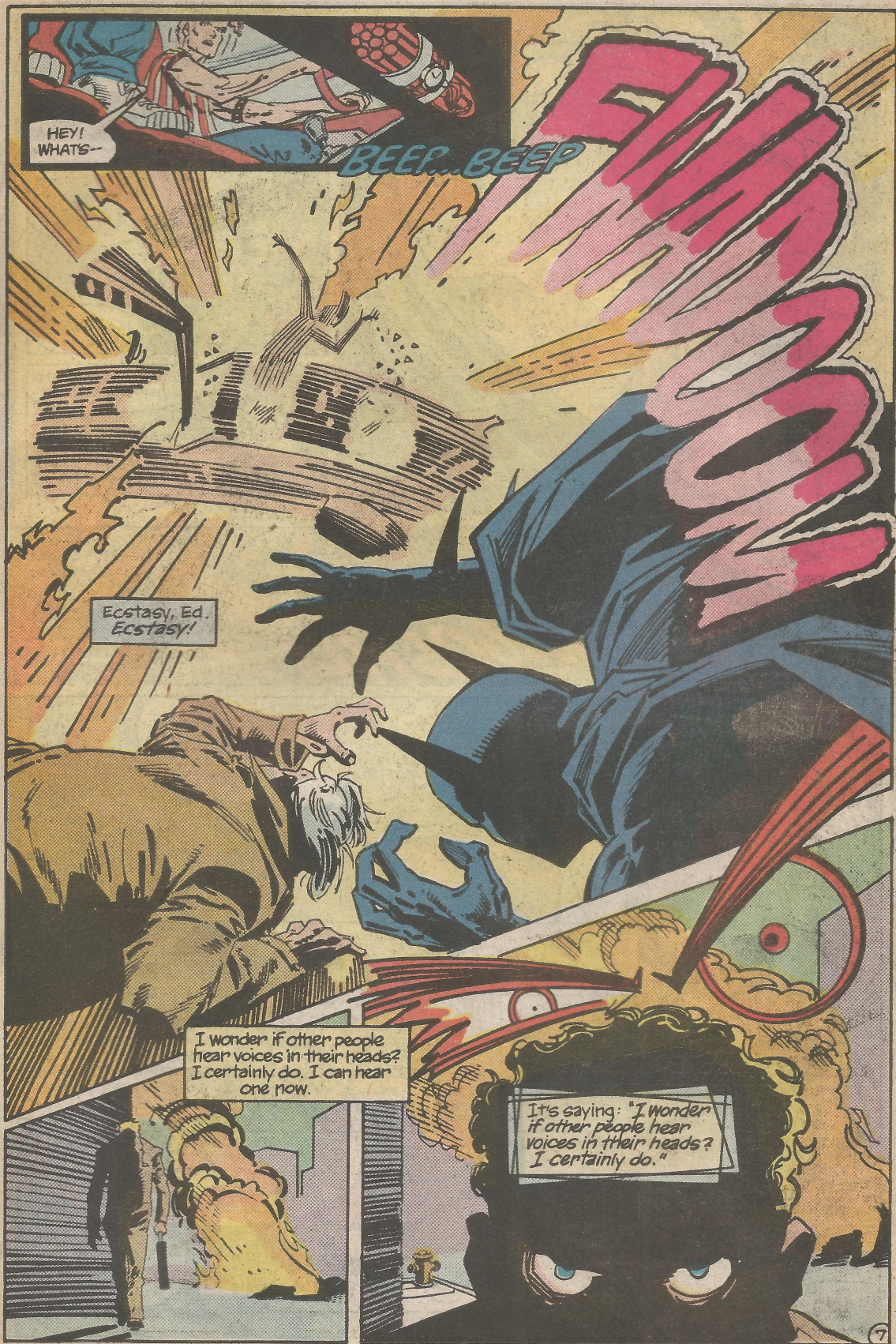
DO--DO WE
HAVE TO? I MEAN,
WE'RE NOT EVEN
SURE THEY ARE
JUNKIES...

You know what we agreed,
Ed. You have to do exactly
as I say, or...

Well, you know the alternative,
Ed. I mean, if that's what you
want, it's okay by me.

N-NO!
I'LL DO
IT...

GOD HELP
ME, I'LL DO
IT!



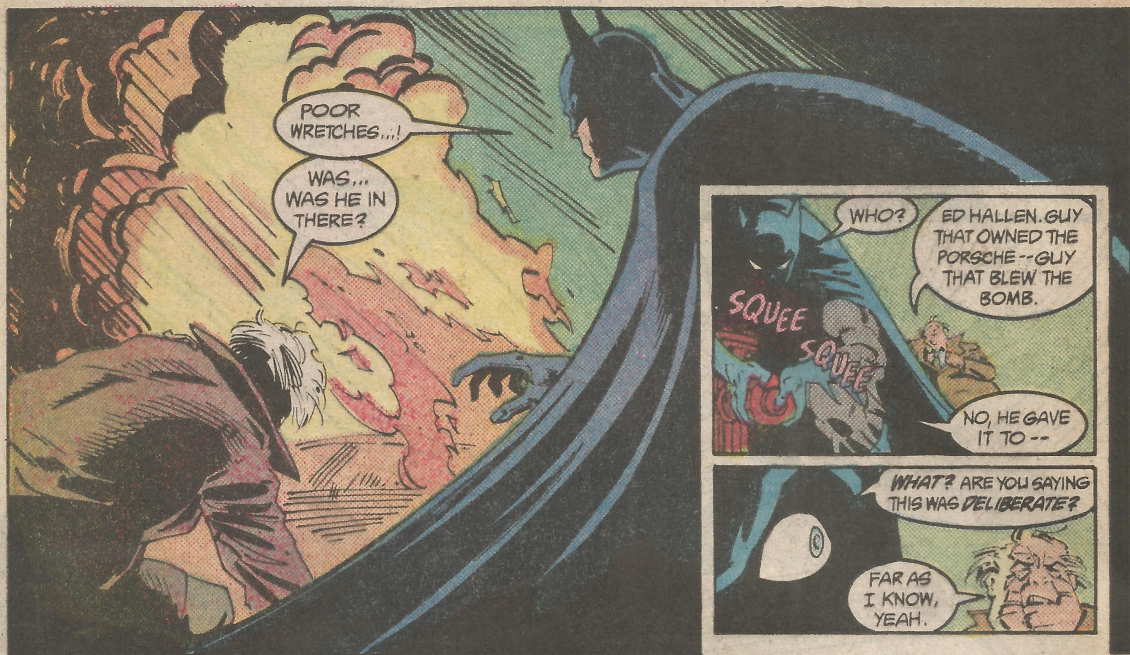
HEY!
WHAT'S--

BEEP...BEEP

Ecstasy, Ed.
Ecstasy!

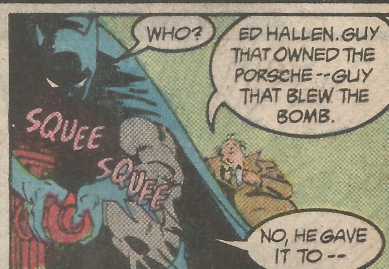
I wonder if other people
hear voices in their heads?
I certainly do. I can hear
one now.

It's saying: "I wonder
if other people hear
voices in their heads?
I certainly do."



POOR
WRETCHES...!

WAS...
WAS HE IN
THERE?



WHO?

ED HALLEN. GUY
THAT OWNED THE
PORSHE -- GUY
THAT BLEW THE
BOMB.

NO, HE GAVE
IT TO --



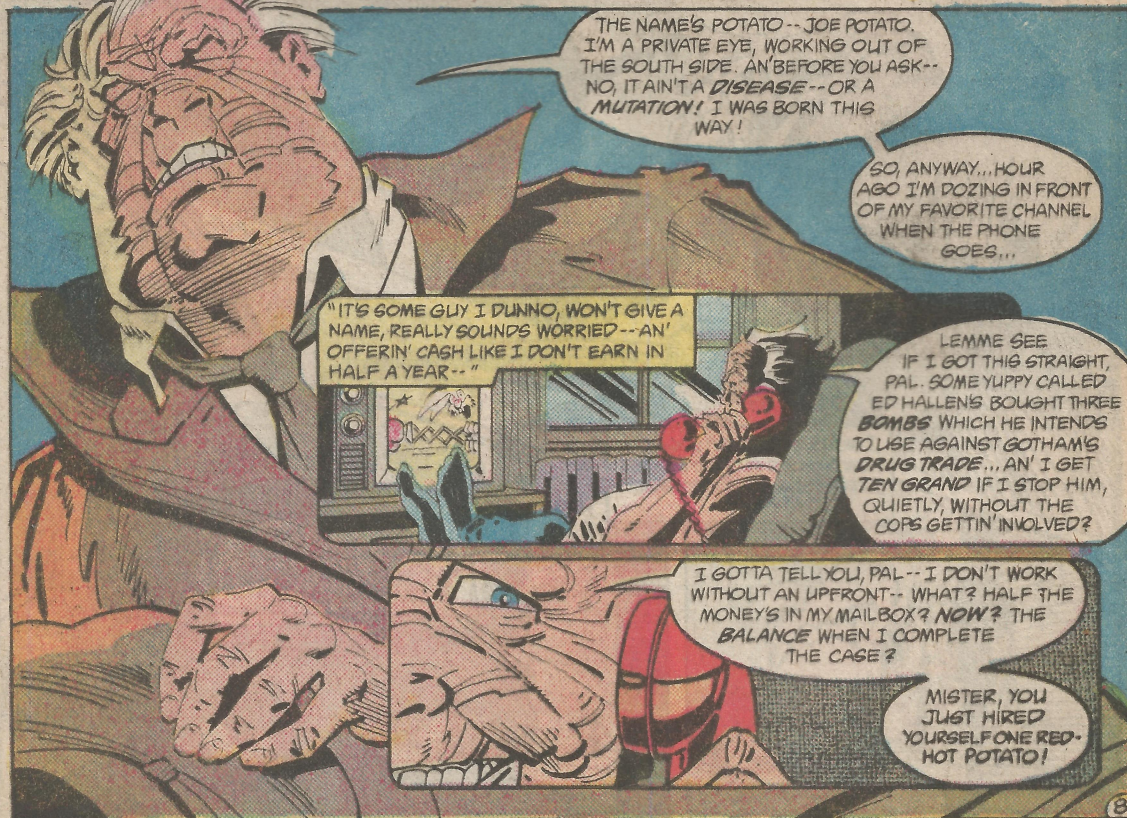
WHAT? ARE YOU SAYING
THIS WAS DELIBERATE?

FAR AS
I KNOW,
YEAH.



YOU BETTER TELL
ME WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE!

FOOOOOSH!!



THE NAME'S POTATO -- JOE POTATO.
I'M A PRIVATE EYE, WORKING OUT OF
THE SOUTH SIDE. AN' BEFORE YOU ASK--
NO, IT AIN'T A *DISEASE*--OR A
MUTATION! I WAS BORN THIS
WAY!

SO, ANYWAY... HOUR
AGO I'M DOZING IN FRONT
OF MY FAVORITE CHANNEL
WHEN THE PHONE
GOES...

"IT'S SOME GUY I DUNNO, WON'T GIVE A
NAME, REALLY SOUNDS WORRIED--AN'
OFFERIN' CASH LIKE I DON'T EARN IN
HALF A YEAR--"

LEMME SEE
IF I GOT THIS STRAIGHT,
PAL. SOME YUPPY CALLED
ED HALLEN'S BOUGHT THREE
BOMBS WHICH HE INTENDS
TO USE AGAINST GOTHAM'S
DRUG TRADE... AN' I GET
TEN GRAND IF I STOP HIM,
QUIETLY, WITHOUT THE
COPS GETTIN' INVOLVED?

I GOTTA TELL YOU, PAL-- I DON'T WORK
WITHOUT AN UPFRONT-- WHAT? HALF THE
MONEY'S IN MY MAILBOX? **NOW?** THE
BALANCE WHEN I COMPLETE
THE CASE?

MISTER, YOU
JUST HIRED
YOURSELF ONE RED-
HOT POTATO!

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 you know my name.
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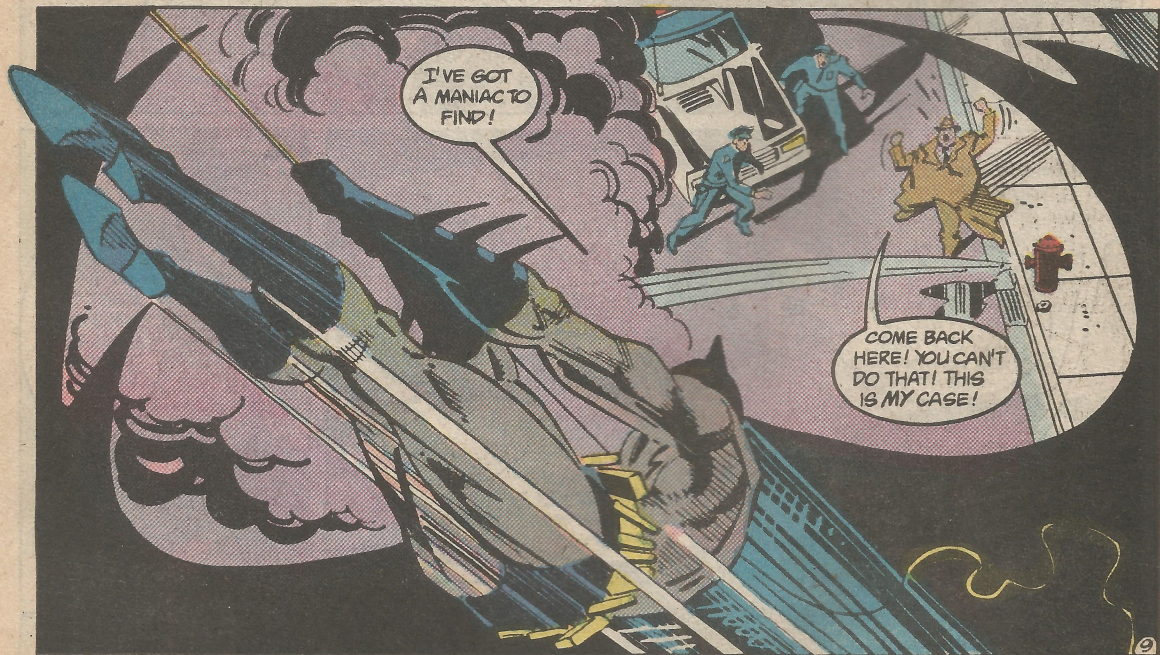
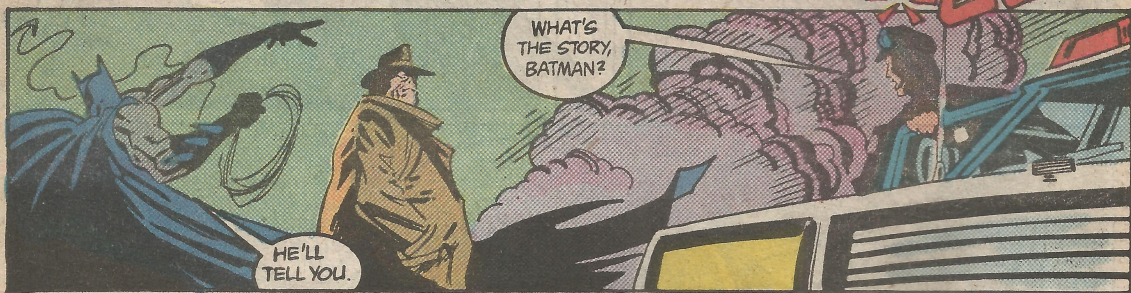
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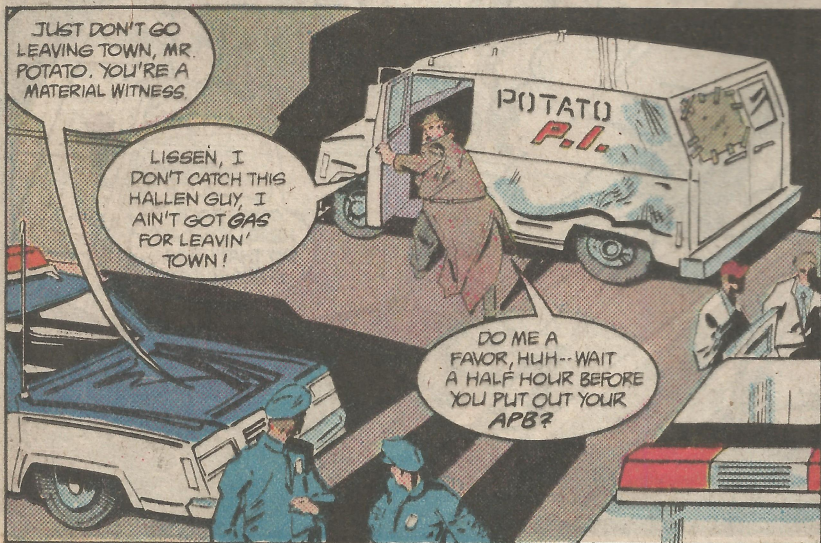
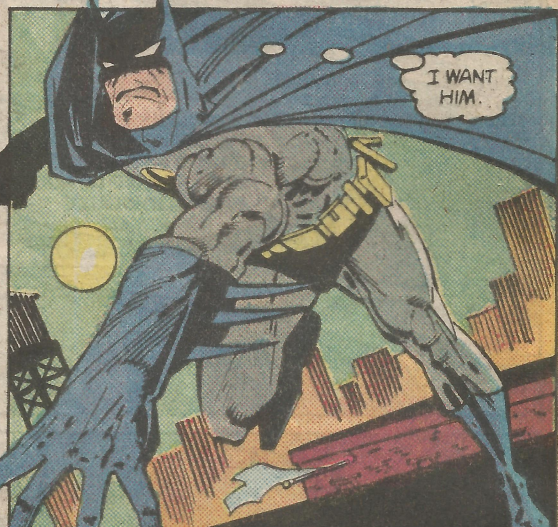
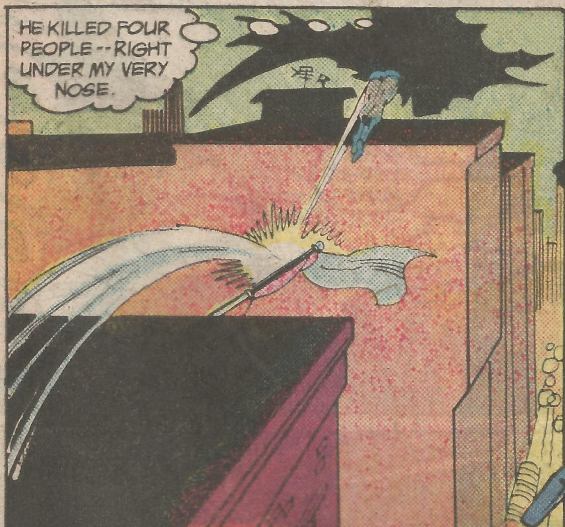
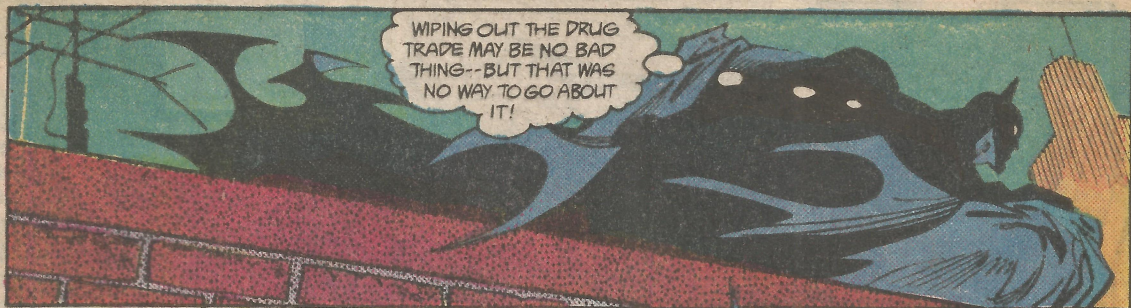


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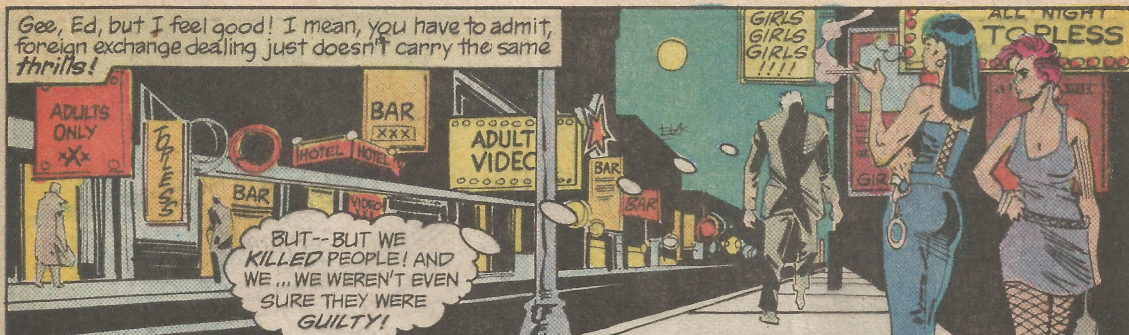
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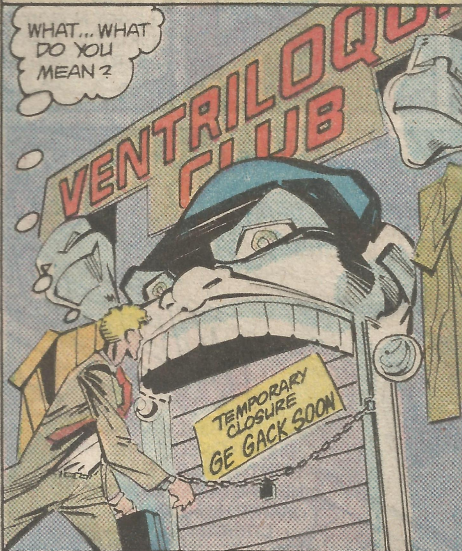
Gee, Ed, but I feel good! I mean, you have to admit, foreign exchange dealing just doesn't carry the same *thrills!*



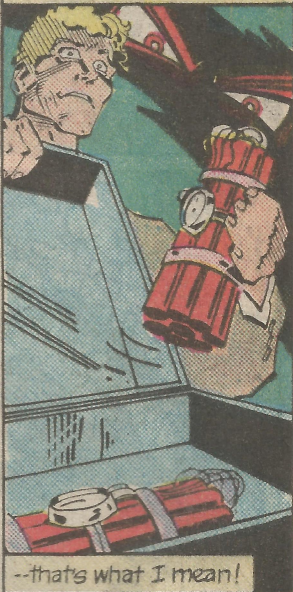
Ah, you worry too much, Ed. It's all that currency trading-- too stressful by half. You ought to relax, let your hair down a little...



The Ventriloquist-- that's that dope dealer the Batman put away. Isn't right the fruits of his evil should be here waiting for him when he's freed, eh, Ed?

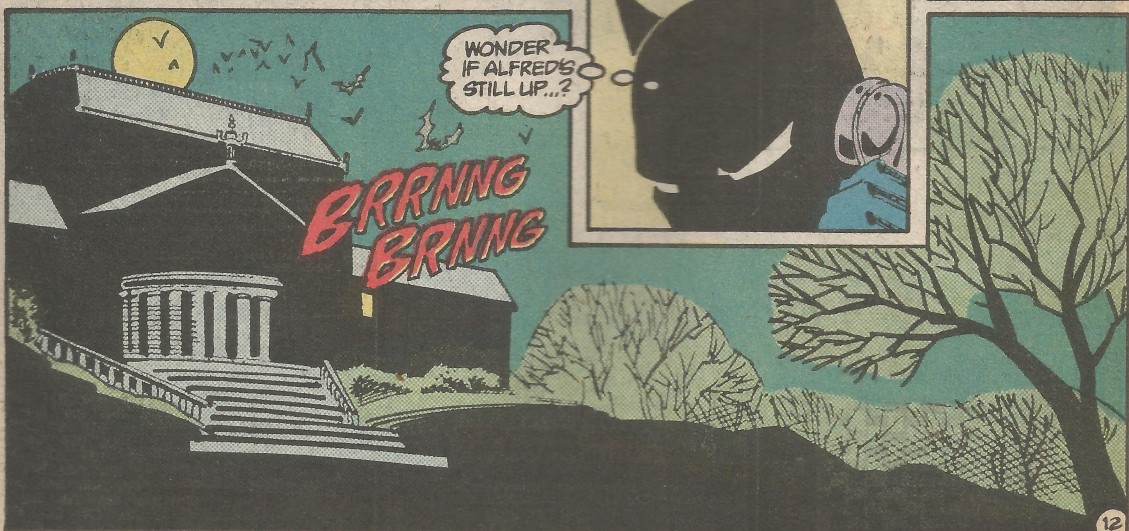
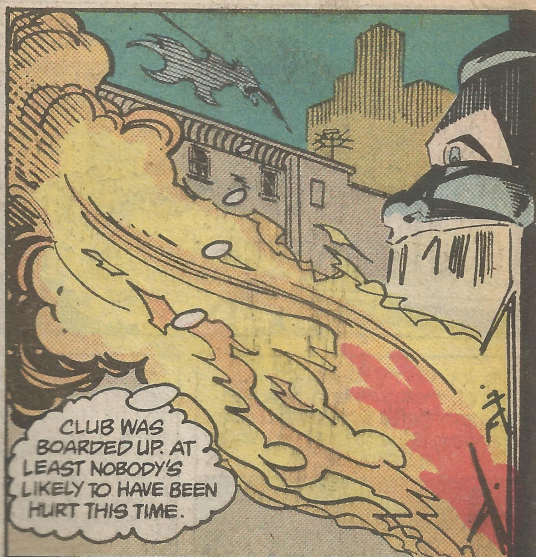


Come on, Ed. What do you think? *Justice*--



Justice...





YES, I
THOUGHT IT
MIGHT BE
YOU, SIR.

WHAT? ME--ABED
AT TWO A.M.? PERISH
THE THOUGHT, SIR!

I OFTEN SIT AROUND TO SEE IF
YOU'LL CALL. NOW--HOW EXACTLY
MAY I BE OF ASSISTANCE?

I WANT YOU TO GO DOWN
TO THE BATCAVE, ALFRED. TAP
INTO THE SOCIAL SECURITY
COMPUTER. I'M LOOKING FOR
ONE ED HALLEN--YUPPY
STOCKBROKER, CURRENCY
TRADER, SOMETHING
LIKE THAT.

I'M SURE YOU
DON'T NEED ME TO
TELL YOU THIS IS
ILLEGAL, SIR.

IT'S IN A GOOD
CAUSE, ALFRED.
BESIDES, IF YOU'RE
CAUGHT, I KNOW
A GOOD LAWYER!

OH, DROLL,
SIR. VERY
DROLL!

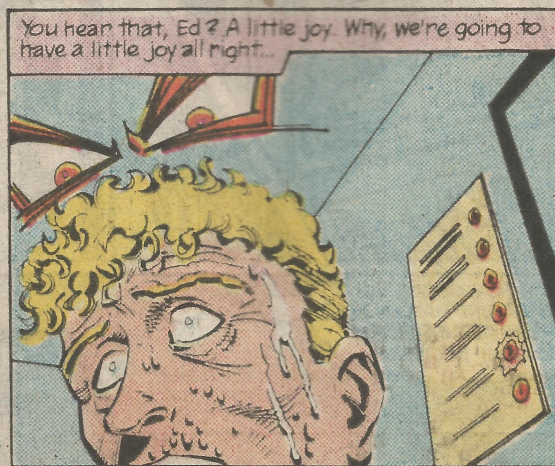
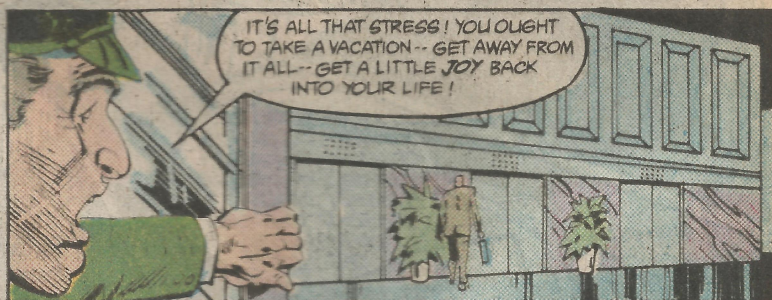
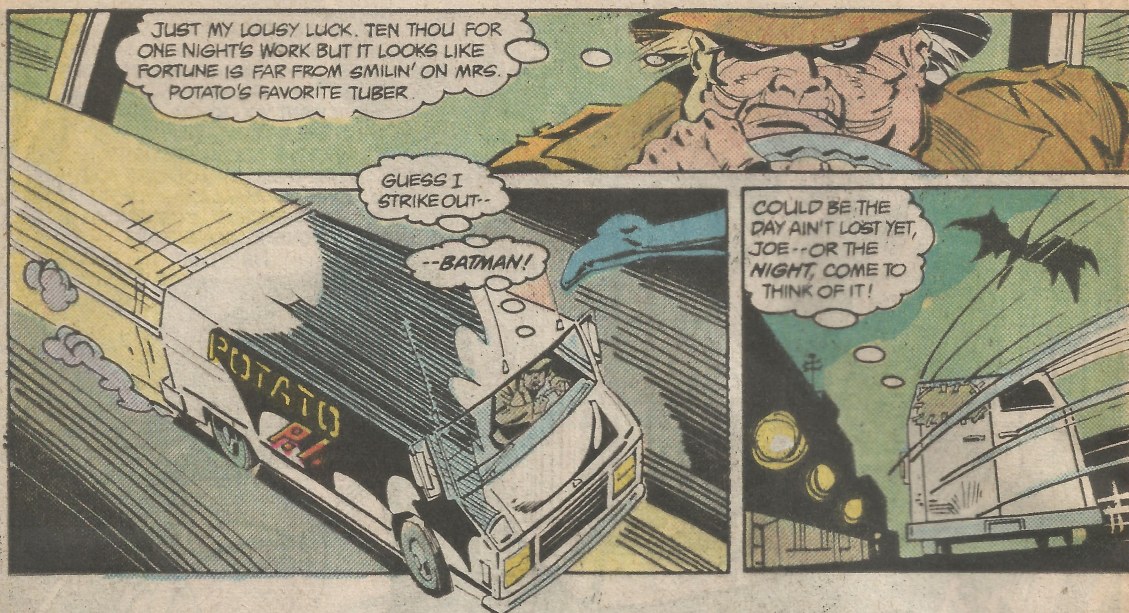
AH, HERE WE ARE.
EDWARD HALLEN--25,
RESIDENT KENSINGTON
HEIGHTS, EMPLOYED AS
CURRENCY TRADER,
BRUFORD TOWER IN
THE FINANCIAL
DISTRICT.

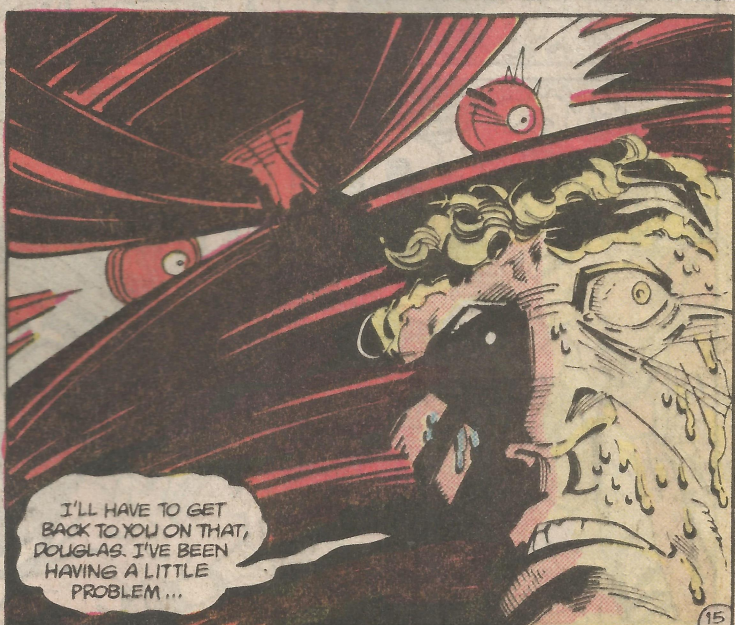
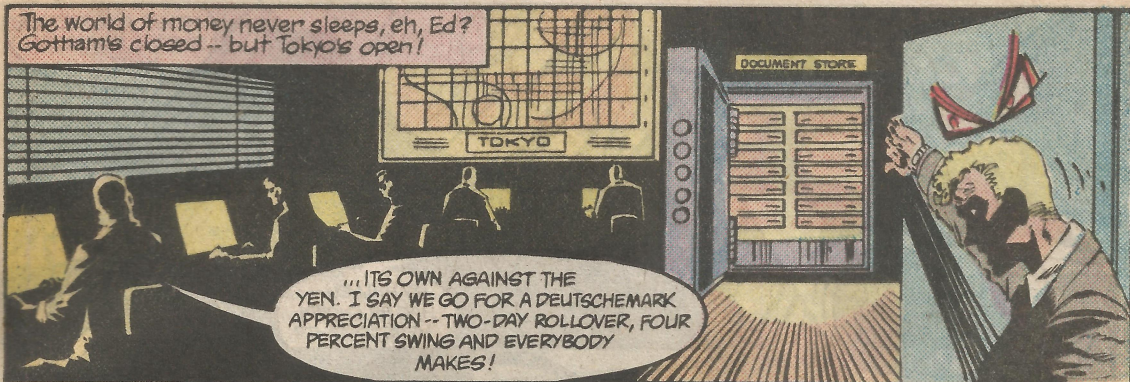
WILL THAT BE
ALL, SIR? OR WOULD
YOU PERHAPS LIKE ME TO
PUT ON MY KNUCKLE-
DUSTERS, PACK MY
ROD, AND JOIN YOU?

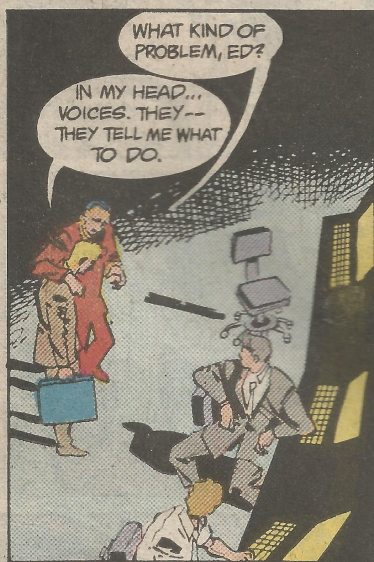
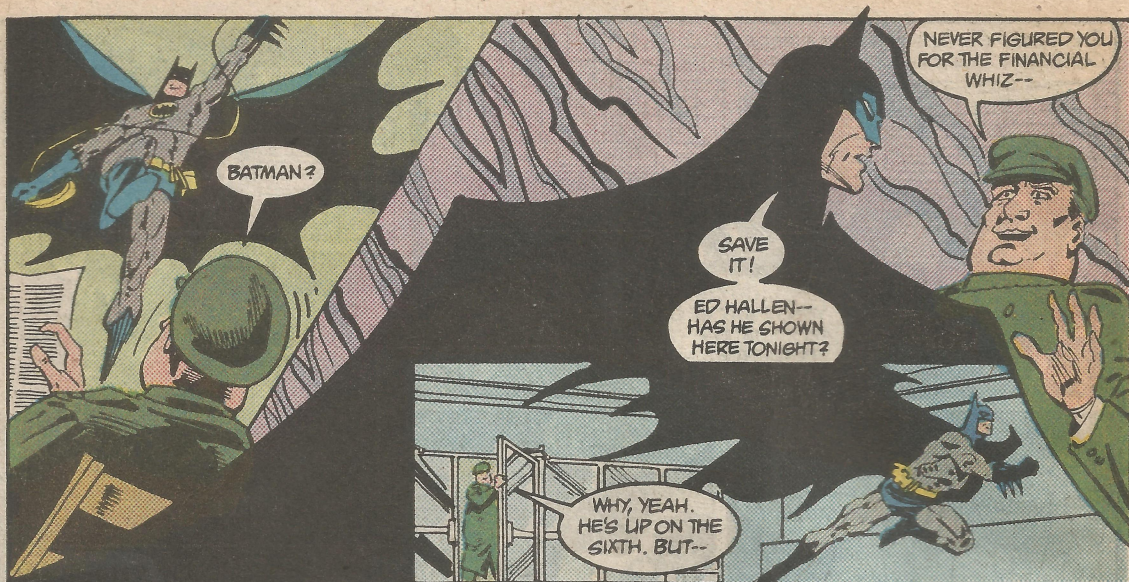
SIR?

IT'S NO GOOD. I'LL
NEVER FIND HALLEN JUST
DRIVIN' AROUND HOPIN'
TO BUMP INTO HIM!

POTATO
P.I.









THE BAT-CAVE

BATMAN

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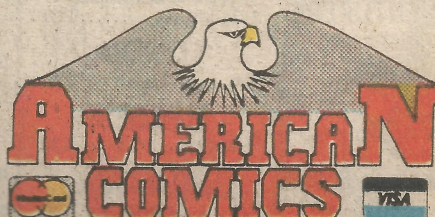
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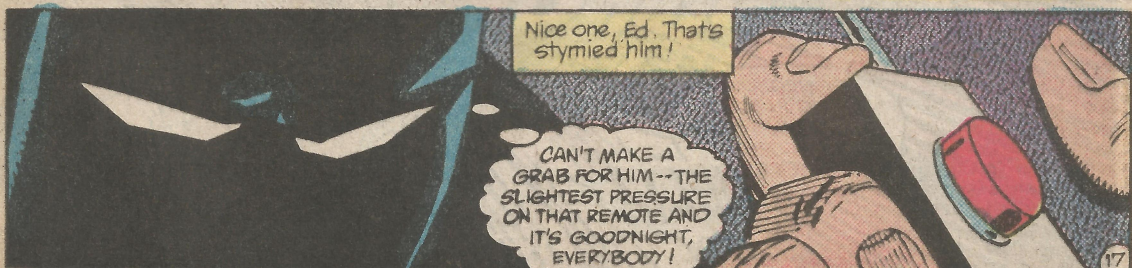
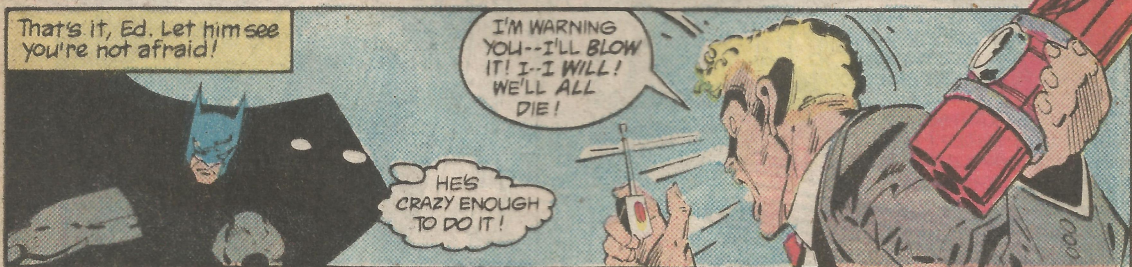
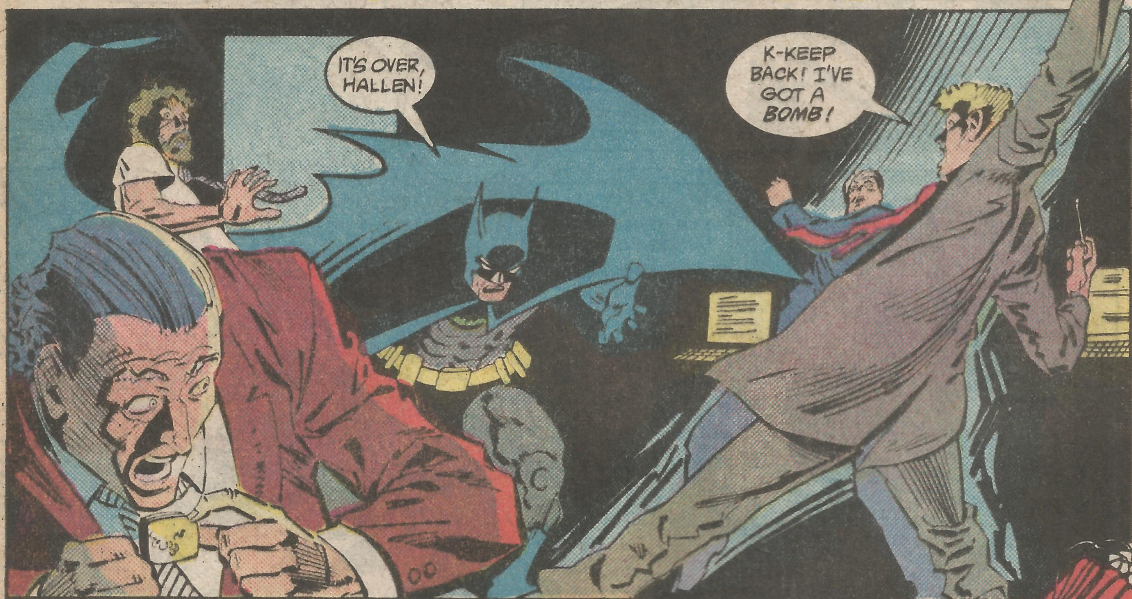
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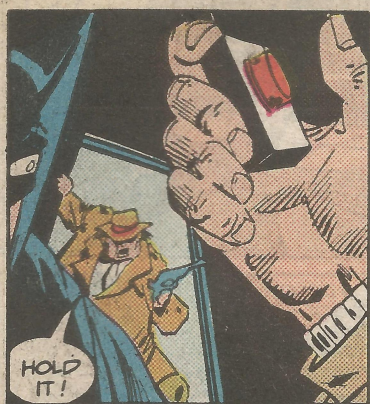


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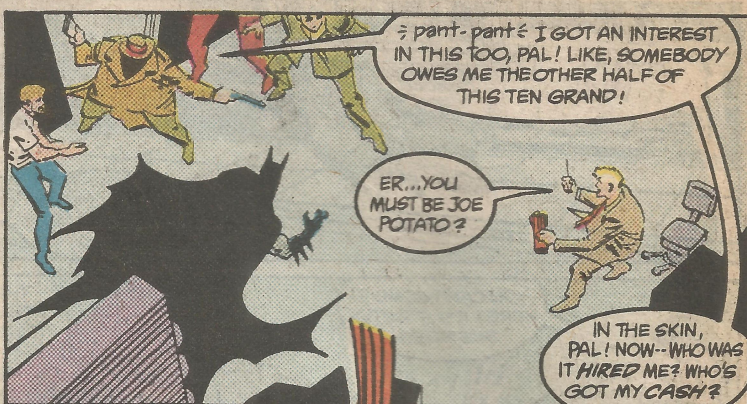
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HOLD IT!



I GOT AN INTEREST IN THIS TOO, PAL! LIKE, SOMEBODY OWES ME THE OTHER HALF OF THIS TEN GRAND!

ER...YOU MUST BE JOE POTATO?

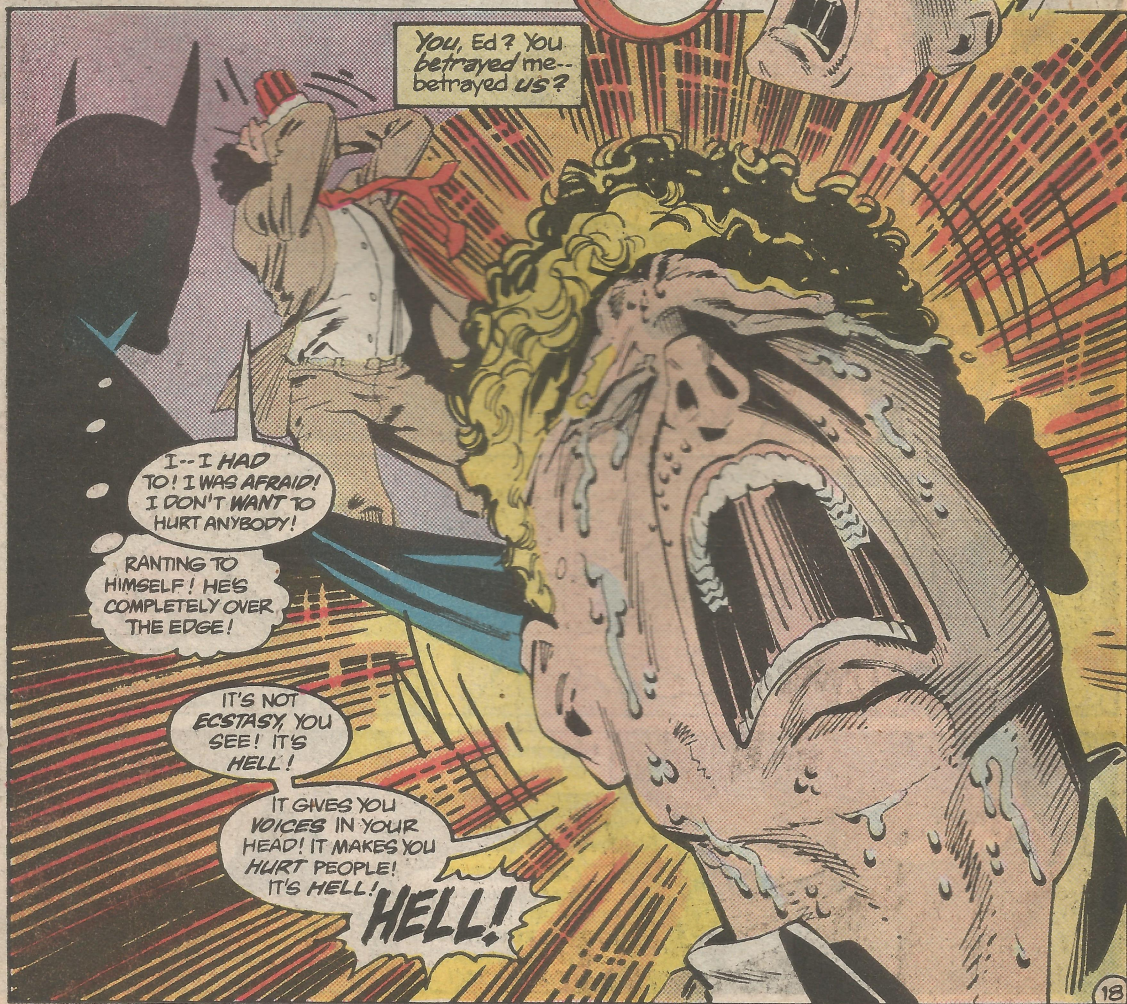
IN THE SKIN, PAL! NOW--WHO WAS IT HIRED ME? WHO'S GOT MY CASH?



Hired him? To track us? Ed--did you do this?



ALL RIGHT! I ADMIT IT-- IT WAS ME! I CALLED HIM WHEN YOU WEREN'T THERE! I LEFT THE MONEY IN HIS MAILBOX!



You, Ed? You betrayed me-- betrayed us?

I--I HAD TO! I WAS AFRAID! I DON'T WANT TO HURT ANYBODY!

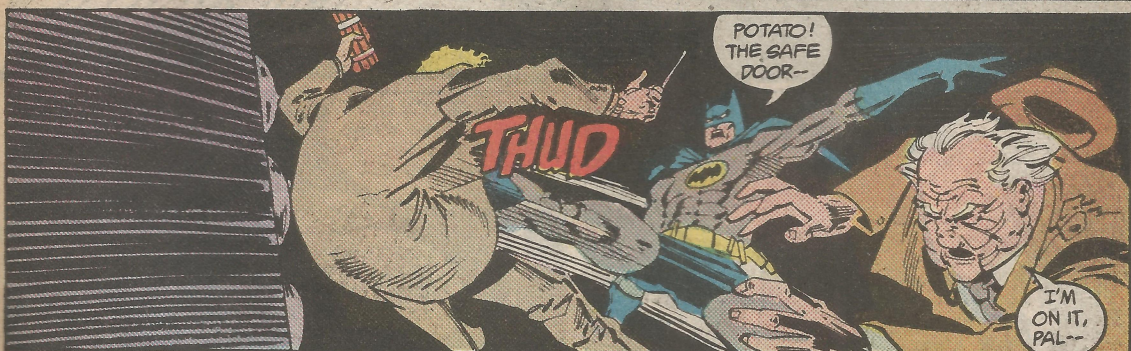
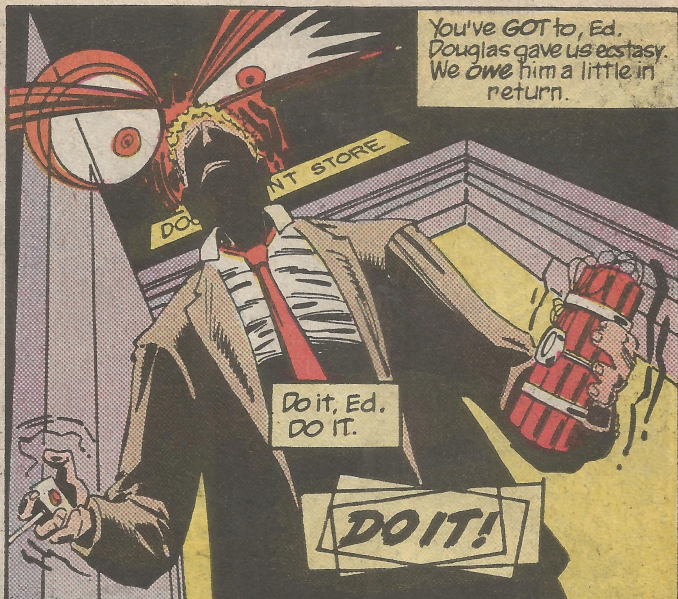
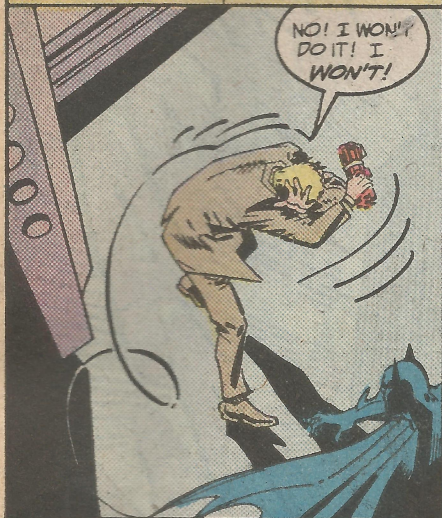
RANTING TO HIMSELF! HE'S COMPLETELY OVER THE EDGE!

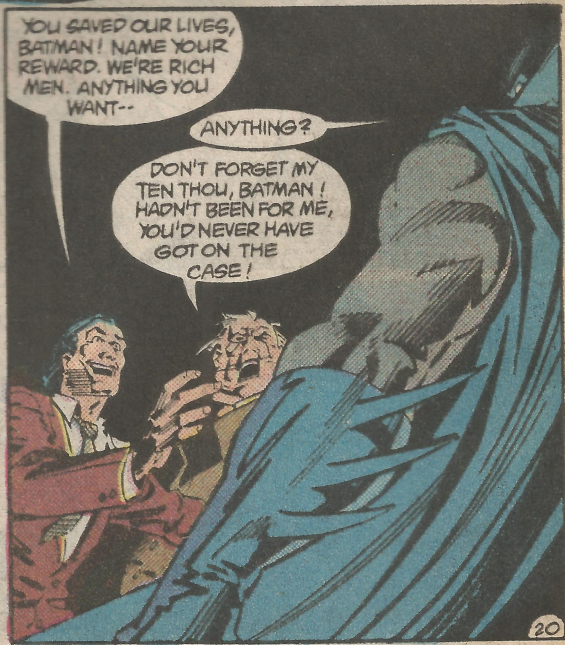
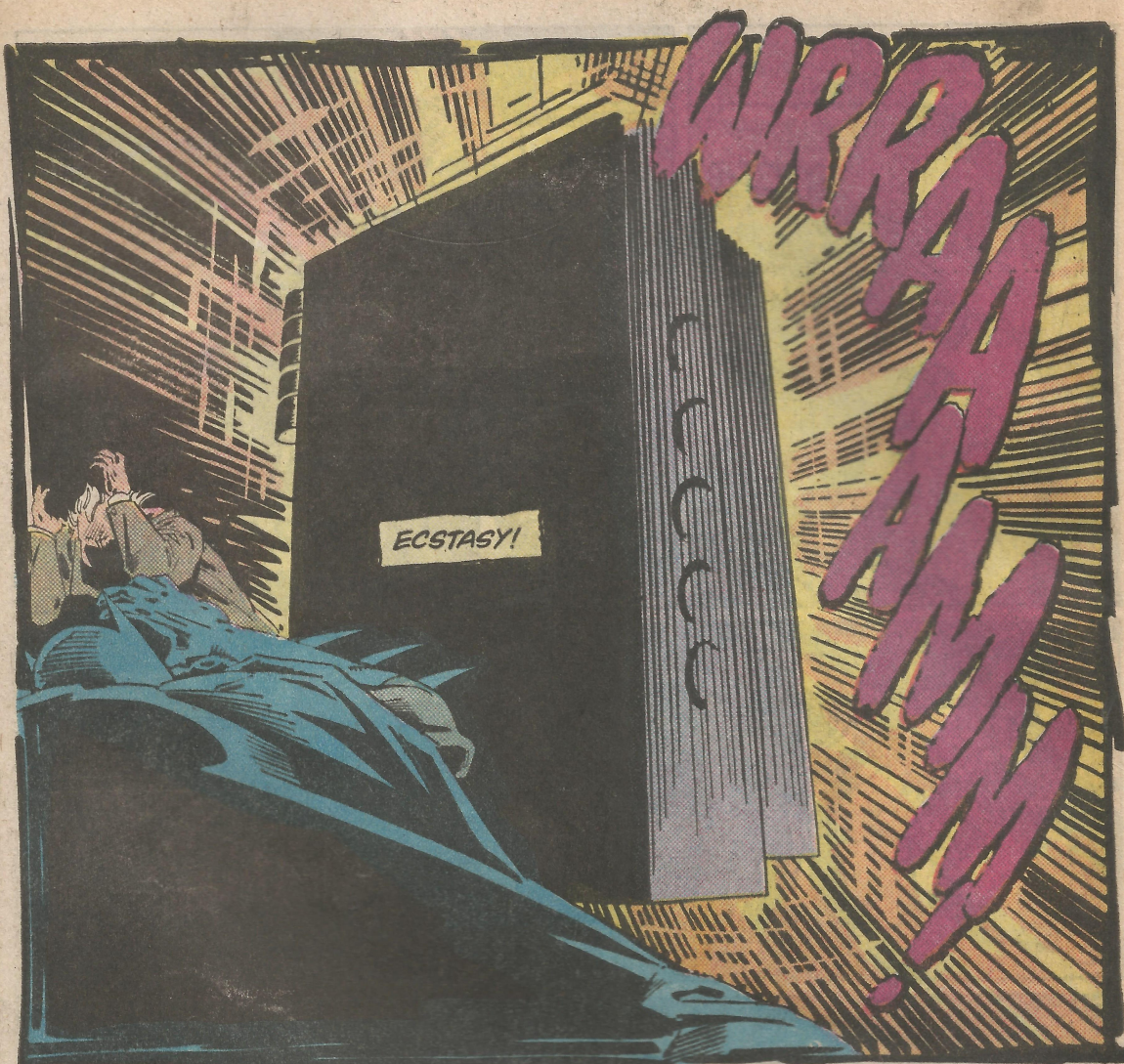
IT'S NOT ECSTASY, YOU SEE! IT'S HELL!

IT GIVES YOU VOICES IN YOUR HEAD! IT MAKES YOU HURT PEOPLE! IT'S HELL!

HELL!

You betrayed us, Ed. Led us right into the hands of the enemy. You realize there's only one way out now...







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COMICS

BEGINNING
IN NOVEMBER

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BEHOLD!

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BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL!

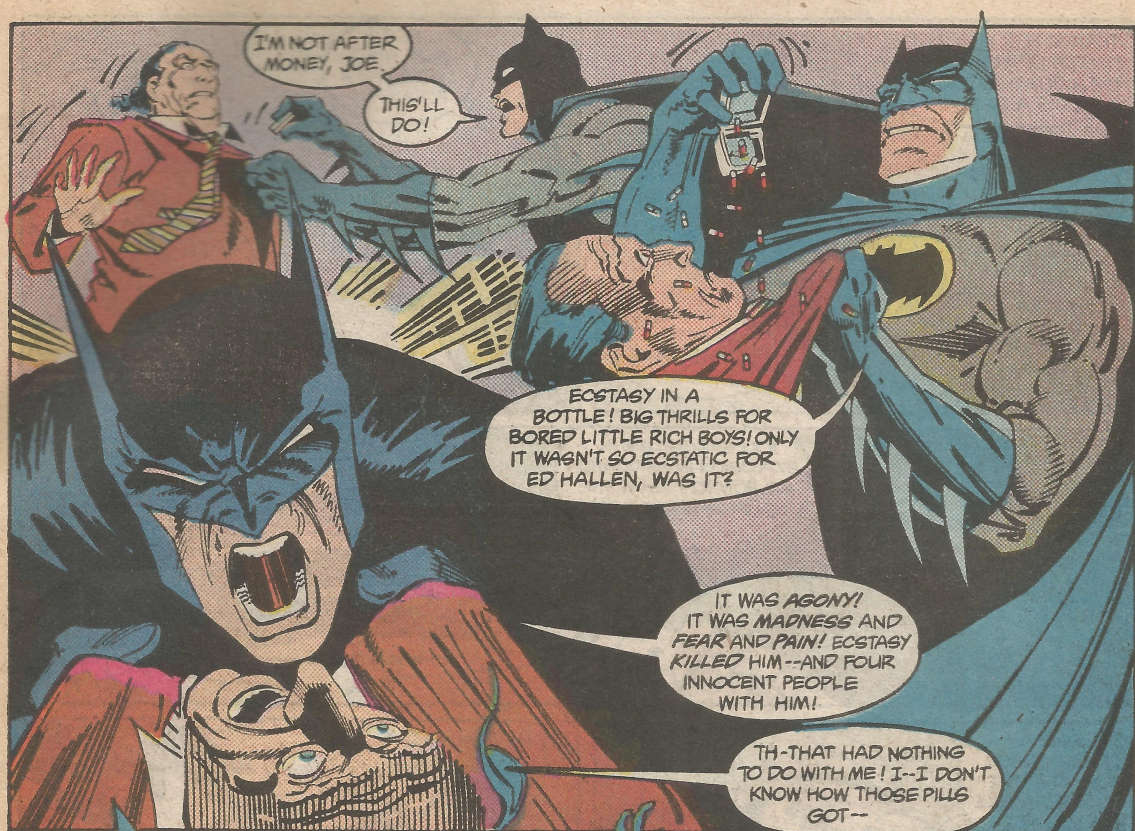
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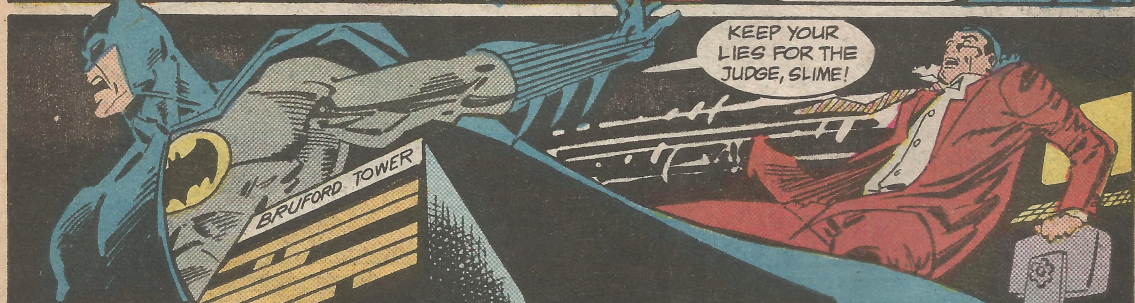
I'M NOT AFTER
MONEY, JOE.

THIS'LL
DO!

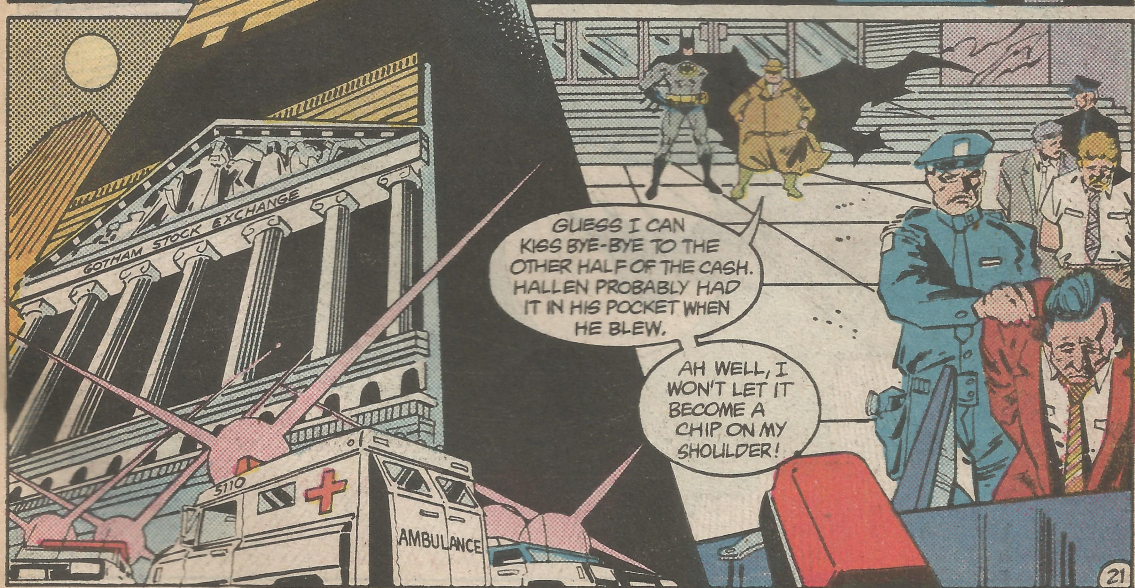
ECSTASY IN A
BOTTLE! BIG THRILLS FOR
BORED LITTLE RICH BOYS! ONLY
IT WASN'T SO ECSTATIC FOR
ED HALLEN, WAS IT?

IT WAS AGONY!
IT WAS MADNESS AND
FEAR AND PAIN! ECSTASY
KILLED HIM--AND FOUR
INNOCENT PEOPLE
WITH HIM!

TH-THAT HAD NOTHING
TO DO WITH ME! I--I DON'T
KNOW HOW THOSE PILLS
GOT--

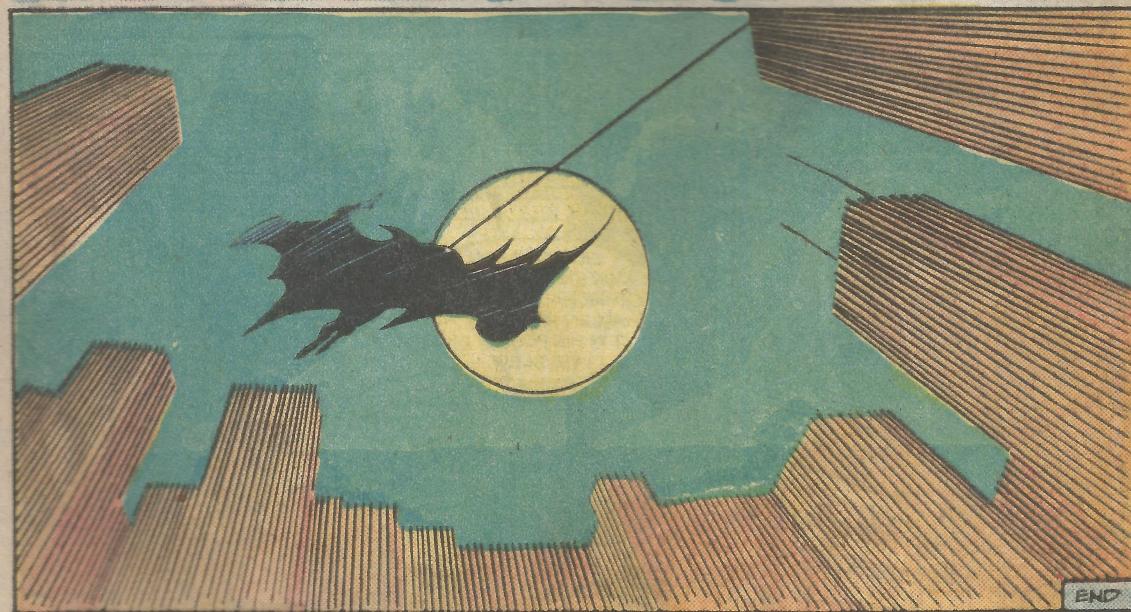
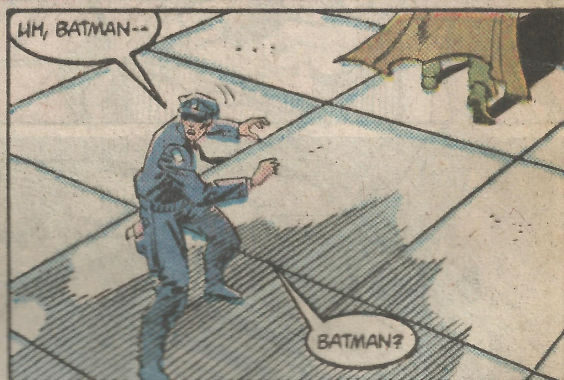


KEEP YOUR
LIES FOR THE
JUDGE, SLIME!



GUESS I CAN
KISS BYE-BYE TO THE
OTHER HALF OF THE CASH.
HALLEN PROBABLY HAD
IT IN HIS POCKET WHEN
HE BLEW.

AH WELL, I
WON'T LET IT
BECOME A
CHIP ON MY
SHOULDER!



DETECTIVE COMMENTS



DC COMICS INC.

666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

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Dear Editors,

DETECTIVE #591 was a first class success! We got to see Bruce Wayne strut his stuff on the party circuit, albeit in a more adult manner than the famous top characterization that other writers have had fun using over the years. We are treated to a classic bad joke on page seven. Kerry Rollo was an interesting side character—not really a villain in the actual sense of the word, just a chap who got way in over his head. More than anything else, I found Rollo to be a 1910's-type character.

The villain (was he prematurely grey, or as old as he looked?) worked out great. Some others may think he looked ludicrous, but this fellow was a highly-trained warrior who's doubtless been honing his special skills for a long time. He was an expert match for Batman, and the bizarre body makeup added to his interesting character. He wore his paint as a badge of honor, much as Bats himself wears his own costume. But I'd only be interested in a rematch if it took place on Australian soil. An Australian on American soil is a novelty (except in the movies), and therefore it worked—don't kill it. Take the rematch to the desert back.

And about the "party life," Mike Barr, among others, enjoyed the bored playboy routine that was popular with Bruce in the 1930's and 1940's—and I still think it would have an occasional use in the present.

In closing, I thought you might be interested in the following line of movie dialogue, especially considering the source:

"A fool is a fool. And a fool enjoys a strange protection not given to other men. No one suspects a fool."—Louis Hayward in "Son of Monte Cristo" (1910)

Charles D. Brown
39 Stockton Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Dear Dan,

The one word that adequately describes the Wagner Grant Breyfogle run of **DETECTIVE COMICS** thrillers is "consistency." I originally dreaded the loss of Mike Barr from these pages because I felt that, at the time, he was the only writer who fully understood the motivations, methods, and moods of the Batman. But then came Mr. Wagner and Mr. Grant. Their story content brings to mind the gloomy, horror genre that most English writers seem to prefer in this medium. I

applaud Dennis O'Neil for finally bringing in qualified writers for this character. Writing Dick Tracy or science fiction does not really qualify one to effectively write as complex and subtle a character as the Batman. Consider my vote cast as yes for the Wagner Grant team to stay for the next 50 or so issues.

I also can't stop raving about Norm Breyfogle's work on these pages. The guy just keeps getting better and better. Okay, I know improvement doesn't qualify as consistency, but it sure is better than the alternative. If we must deviate from the status quo, this is the direction to go. Look at page four and see if you can grasp what I mean. That's an interesting looking design for the new Bat-mobile.

If I wore a hat, it would be off to Adrienne Roy. The colorist's efforts are equally as important as the inker's to the task of creating the mood in the setting for each story. The reds and golds masterfully fill the darkness with kinetic energy. The blues and purples chill it with fear. Please give Ms. Roy a prestige book or graphic novel so that she may truly unleash the power of her talent.

If you give strong talents a vehicle and strong subject matter presented creatively, you are going to have a strong, gripping story. That's what we have in our sweaty little hands. This isn't happiness, but it's Batman as he should be.

Karl Kibodeaux
1924 N. Ave. G
Freeport, TX 77541

Dear DC,

Just a short note to thank all of you for the very intriguing story in **DETECTIVE** #591.

I must agree with Richard Froyest who found that rock music and comics are a great combination. When I read this story of the Batman and the Aborigine, I listened to the band Midnight Oil's "Beds are Burning." It really hit home on all bases. I wonder if anyone else got that impression too?

Well, I gotta ramble. Keep up the good work. Oh, yes! Awesome cover on #591!

Steven Acevedo
Bronx, NY

Steve, your choice of background music is pretty appropriate. I, for one, found that song playing in my head as I read #591. And for those of you who don't know, Midnight Oil is a very politically oriented band from Australia, and their song "Beds are Burning" is about the plight of the aborigines.

Dear Dan,

DETECTIVE COMICS, since Messrs. Wagner and Grant have taken over the scripting, has become, well, fascinating. These two certainly have a bizarre collective imagination. They have succeeded in coming up with villain after villain who fit right into the Batman's Rogues' Gallery. I don't know if any are good enough to earn themselves a permanent spot in such impressive company. Mr. Kladaver might be worth a return engagement, if he's in any shape for it. Never mind. How many villains in the last 20 years have earned a permanent spot in the Batman's Rogues' Gallery? After you name Ras-al-Ghul, the list gets pretty thin.

In fact, few writers have made much effort to introduce new blood, and none have created as many new villains as Wagner and Grant, let alone villains as outrageous and macabre as these. And they've only been at work for ten issues! I will be surprised if, before they're through, they don't make at least one permanent addition to the Batman's motley crew. The sheer inventiveness of their villains has been very entertaining, and has made up for the rather pedestrian plots.

Yes, the plots have been rather pedestrian; in fact, simplistic would not be too harsh a word in most cases. Although Wagner and Grant have made an effort at more complexity by interweaving a number of different plot lines—and doing it skillfully, I might add—each of these plot lines has been simple, straightforward, and predictable with no cleverness to them, unlike the villains. The Batman has never been seriously challenged—that is, forced to think. It has been the Batman's trademark for... well, forever, that he thought his way out of his problems. He has to; he has no superpowers to make life easy for him. The solutions may be clever or stupid, but it was generally accepted that the Batman's brain was his best weapon. We see none of that in **DETECTIVE** these days.

That is my main gripe, although I might hope for more coordination between the Batman's two magazines—not of story line, but of characterization. On the other hand, I enjoy both versions, so what the heck. I do enjoy Norm Breyfogle's art; it is bizarre enough to fit the stories without completely forgetting the gritty reality within which the Batman operates. Neither the Batman nor his foes can be considered realistic, exactly, but they fit into a world of burns and drugs that is indistinguishable from the particular fantasy world the rest of us inhabit. If

only he can avoid the infamous Pyramid Head Effect (to quote leucr writer Kip Talbot).

So keep up the good work, boys, although I really would appreciate a good, old-fashioned whodunit once in a while—even if the villain is outre and bizarre. See ACTION COMICS ANNUAL #1 if you don't think that combination is practical.

Speaking of which, let me put in a plea for semi-regular team-ups between the Batman and Superman. You could label them WORLD'S FINEST SPECIALS, and bring them out once a year, or when the urge strikes you. Not too often, since they aren't friendly anymore; but that ACTION ANNUAL convinced me that they make at least as interesting a team as the old Superman and Batman did. Their antagonism makes their working together fun to watch.

Think about it.

Sincerely,

Rick Peterson

12290 Corte Sabio #3208

San Diego, CA 91218

A Batman/Superman team-up special? Ooh, Rick, Rick, Rick. We'll see what we can do, old chum. But only if you admit that the Pyramid Head Effect works well if you see it as an IMPRESSION of the Batman, and not a realistic pin-up shot. He's a big man, after all, and that combined with the cape and cowl would probably leave onlookers with a pretty intimidating impression. Kinda artistic license, y'know?

Meanwhile, here's a response to a "From the Den" of a few months ago:

Dear Denny,

I read with sympathetic feelings your piece in "From the Den" regarding your name identity. I have gone through several stages myself and am still going over the question of how my name moniker relates to my identity.

Having, naturally, never known of you other than as "Denny," and having seen the little portrait that accompanies your column, I imagine you to be a casual, youngish-middle-aged fellow. You seem to be "one of the guys," getting paid for something "grown-ups" would not consider a blue chip job: producing comics. This image appeals to me, but much of my assumption is based on your nickname.

I began life as "Ann" (my mother had wanted me to be named Sybil... yecch!), but as I grew up to be a "tom-boy," I adapted my last name (Herbert) into a nickname: Herbie. I was Herbie from 11th grade through college. To this day, some people who have known me a long time call me Herbie. One older couple at church still affectionately refers to me by that name, which usually jolts other people. I was even Herbie to my colleagues at the school where I've taught for ten years. It's a fairly informal school, and I have from the beginning allowed my students to call me Ann.

Then I married and adopted my husband's name. Gone was the Herbert from which the Herbie derived. Gone at the same time was my former footloose

single life. At that point I began introducing myself as Ann. It was a strange feeling. "Herbie" had always signified sprightly energy; "Ann" had only been the name on my paychecks, signifying responsibility. Now, married and later a mother, "Herbie" was fading away.

I thought the situation was stable, but it's not yet. Last year I turned 35 and I very gradually began to see myself as more like the veteran teachers I work with and no longer an overgrown rookie. I want more respect... the trappings of respect will do nicely. I think... from my young students. I don't feel so eager to crawl around on the floor at game time. I'm willing to retreat from joining in the revelry if it will help me keep order during academic periods. I'm toying with the idea of having my students call me "Mrs. Brachwitz." Who am I now?

Whew! That got heavy for a minute. I don't know if your experience is in any way similar, but I wanted you to know that I identified with the issue you raised. Let us know how it turns out. (By the way, what did your parents call you when you were in trouble?)

Best regards,

Ann C.H. Brachwitz

(Formerly Herbie)

5521 Boyer Street

Philadelphia, PA 19138

Mrs. Brachwitz? Mr. O'Neil informs us that he was such a boring kid that he never got in trouble. I call him "Denny." Mike Gold calls him "Dennis." Dick Giordano calls him "Sergius." Bob Greenberger calls him "Sensei." And, no. Nobody ever calls him late for lunch. Late for meetings? All the time. But never late for lunch.

Dear Mr. O'Neil,

I found the "Aborigine" issue of DETECTIVE COMICS (#591) quite haunting. The cover was, as usual for Norm Breyfogle, very dynamic and eye-catching, and the interior art was much the same. I think the new design for the Bat-mobile is totally rad. I hope we get to see it again. This issue was better than even THE CULT, if you can believe that. I felt that Kerry Rollo got the fate he deserved. Alan Grant and John Wagner are absolutely awesome writers. What else are they planning to work on for DC (the only comics company in MY book)? I hope they stay on TEC for at least another year. The art is as good as the story is as good as the art.

You get the picture, I think. You folks have made every issue truly enjoyable. And, after all, that's why we read comics anyway, isn't it?

Don't go changin',
Larce Zarlinne, D.D.S.
Istanbul, NY

Hey! Out of room! Bummer! Parting is such sweet sorrow. See you next month with DETECTIVE COMICS #595, and our INVASION FIRST STRIKE EXTRA! It'll be Batman against some aliens like you folks haven't seen it since the sixties! Behave with us, or there's a chance that you'll miss... "Our Man in Havana."

—Dan Raspler
Assistant Editor

From the Den

Pat Bastienne stopped me in the hall and said, "We're about to renew Jim Aparo's contract. Do you have any objections?"

Objections? Well, no, you could say I don't have any objections to having Jim continue working with me. The only objection I have is that we can't pay him a million dollars a year.

He's very quiet. Very modest. And very good. He has never had the name or fame or, to be honest, the fan following of some of his colleagues, but professionals invariably speak of him with respect and admiration—particularly professional writers. He never complains that a script is too difficult, too tricky, too demanding. He simply figures out a way to do what he is asked and then does it, always well and sometimes brilliantly.

He is the kind of artist who makes an editor want to come to work in the morning—dedicated, extremely accomplished and reliable and pleasant and completely devoid of temperament.

I'm lucky. I've worked with Jim as both writer and editor off and on for almost 20 years. He's never failed to exceed my expectations and I count the projects I've shared with him among the most satisfying I've been involved in.

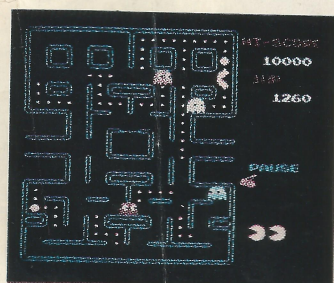
Jim might not be happy when he reads this. He's not much of a self-promoter, which may be why he hasn't always gotten the recognition he deserves, and he's generally stayed far away from spotlights, so I assume he doesn't like to be praised. I hope he forgives me. People like Jim Aparo are rare, indeed, and if we can't pay them a million a year, at least we can occasionally acknowledge who and what they are, and what they mean to us.

Denny

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Guide PAC-MAN around the maze to eat all the dots without getting eaten by the hungry ghosts.



racking up the points.

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His only defense is to eat the energizers, special pellets which empower PAC-MAN to

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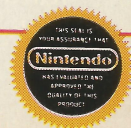
Remember, it's a jungle out there. So gobble — or get gobbled!

Tengen

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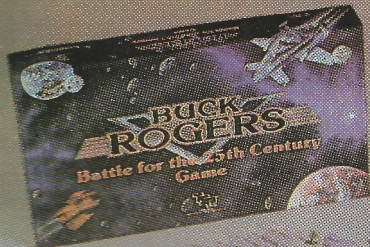




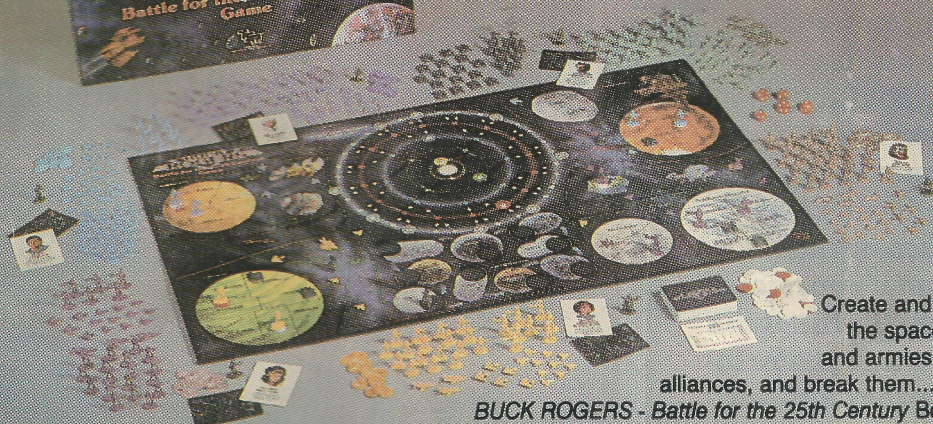
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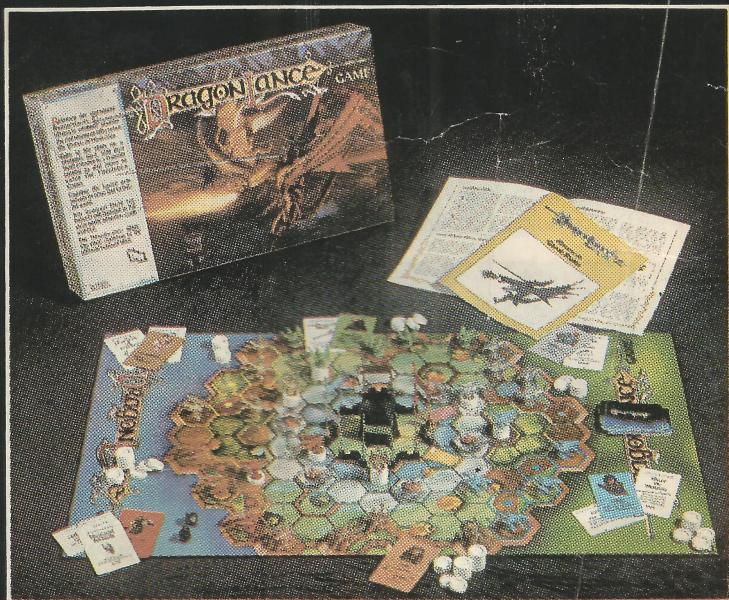


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